11: Lansdell--294 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116

"YAKUTSK.

The province of Yakutsk. --Rivers. --Minerals. --The town of Yakutsk. --Its temperature. --Inhabitants. --The Yukaghirs. --The Yakutes. --Their dwellings. --Food. --Dress. --Products. --Occupations. --Industries. --Language. --Religion. --Route from Yakutsk to Okhotsk. --Reindeer riding. --Summer journey. --Treatment of horses."

11: Lansdell--294-295 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-1-2
116 131, 631

"The province of Yakutsk is the largest in Siberia, and covers an area of no less than a million and a half of square miles, and is therefore nearly as large as the whole of Europe, omitting Russia.* The total population of this enormous province is 235,000, --

* It is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the west by the Yeneseisk, and on the east by the Sea-coast provinces; whilst on its south lie the three provinces of Irkutsk, Trans-Baikal, and the Amur. The northern and western portions of the province are flat, but towards the south and south-east are the Yablonoi and Stanovoi mountain ranges, continuations, in a north-easterly direction, of the mighty Altai chain. The great river of the province is the Lena, whose waters are drained from an area of 800,000 square miles. From the slopes on the western side of Baikal its upper portion runs in a north-easterly direction as far as Yakutsk, after which the Lower Lena runs due north to the Arctic Ocean. The total length of the river is about 2,500 miles, with a fall of 3,000 feet. East of the Lower Lena are the rivers Yana, Indigirka, and Kolima, all of which are navigable and of considerable size, though small by comparison with their gigantic sister.

that is to say, it has about one-seventh part of an inhabitant to each square mile. The yearly number of marriages is 5,000, and the births 12,000. The Russian town population in 1876 numbered about 2,000, and the [295] country population 5,000; of which there were hereditary nobles, 100; personal nobles, 450; ecclesiastical persons, 600; military, 1,700; and the rest, upwards of 220,000, were natives--that is to say, Tunguses, Yukaghirs, and Yakutes. The natives are divided into communities, under golovahs, or mayors, of their own race, who are, however, subject to the Russian authorities. The province is divided into five uyezds."

11: Lansdell--295 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 135

"The chief mineral product is gold, which has frequently to be procured from frozen ground. The valleys of the Vitim and Olekma especially are rich in this mineral. In the valley of the Vitim, about 200 versts from its mouth, are quarries of mica, from which the whole of Siberia was formerly supplied with a substitute for window-glass. Mr. Erman procured plates of brown mica from one to two feet square. As, however, I saw glass used everywhere, I presume that the demand for mica must have diminished greatly."

11: Lansdell--295 [2] M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 136

"In the forests of the Vitim and Olekma are caught the smallest sables, with the finest, blackest, and hence most valuable furs. The squirrels of the district are hunted only in winter, when they are sometimes black and sometimes bright grey, their fur in summer being red, the hair loose, and skin valueless. The black realize the highest price, and are frequently met with south of the river, while north of the Lena none but grey are captured. The hunters think that this difference depends upon the nature of the forest."

11: Lansdell--296 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 346, 361, 492

"The town of Yakutsk, which the natives proudly call 'the city of the Yakutes,' presents a curious medley of dwellings; for there are seen not only the Government buildings, and the wooden houses of the Russians, but also the less pretentious winter dwellings of the Yakutes, and even their summer yourts. Oxen here take the place of horses. Women and girls ride them astride; their sledges also are often drawn by them, the driver being mounted on one of the animals. The cathedral is built of stone, and dedicated to St. Nicolas; and there are in the town some half-dozen churches, in which certain parts of the service, if not the whole, are performed in the Yakute language. The chief ecclesiastic is Dionysius, Bishop of Yakutsk and Viluisk, who has in his hyperborean diocese 49 churches and chapels, and one monastery containing 13 monks."

11: Lansdell--296-297 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-1-2
116, 132, 147

"Yakutsk has the credit of being the coldest place upon the face of the earth. The mean temperature of the air is 18·5 Fahrenheit. A degree of cold takes place there every year between the 17th December and 18th February, exceeding 58° below zero. During Mr. Erman's stay the cold reached even 71·5 below zero. Mercury, therefore, is frozen at Yakutsk for [297] one-sixth of the year. An exceedingly warm summer follows this cold winter, and continues from about the 12th May to the 17th September. The ground is then thawed three feet deep, and though the crops rest on perpetually frozen strata, yet they produce fifteen-fold on an average, and in particular places forty-fold*

* It is well known that in the northern parts of Siberia the ground is always frost-bound, but to what depth is not so easily determined. During the stay, however, of Mr. Erman at Yakutsk it happened that a resident was digging a well, down which the man of science went, and pronounced that he found the soil frozen to a depth of 50 feet below the surface. So accustomed, however, do the natives become to the cold, that with the thermometer at unheard-of degrees below freezing point, the Yakute women, with bare arms, stand in the open-air markets, chattering and joking as pleasantly as if in genial spring. Inside their houses, in the heated part of the rooms, they get the temperature up to 65° or 75°; but one day, when the thermometer stood at 9°, Mr.

11: Lansdell--296-297 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-2
116, 132, 147

Erman found the children of both sexes running about quite naked, not only in the house, but even in the open air. In fact, the great cold is not thought a grievance in Siberia, for a man clothed in furs may sleep at night in an open sledge when the mercury freezes in the thermometer; and, wrapped up in his pelisse, he can lie without inconvenience on the snow under a thin tent when the temperature of the air is 30° below zero."

11: Lansdell--299 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 142, 177, 181

"In the centre of the Yakutsk province, occupying the valley of the Lena, roam the Yakutes, some of whom I met as far off as Nikolaefsk. They are of middle height, and of a light copper colour, with black hair, which the men cut close. The sharp lines of their faces express indolent and amiable gentleness rather than vigour and passion. They reminded me of North American Indians; and I agree with Erman, who says that their appearance is that of a people who have grown wild rather than of a thoroughly and originally rude race. Those I saw, however, having been long settled among the Russians, had perhaps become somewhat more polished than their wandering brethren. As a race they are good-tempered, orderly, hospitable, and capable of enduring great privation with patience; but in independence of character they contrast unfavourably with their Tunguse neighbours. Lay a finger in anger on one of the Tunguses, and nothing will induce him to forget the insult; whereas with the Yakutes, the more they are thrashed the better they work. * [RCH: For text of footnote see category 116, pp. 299-300.]"

11; Lansdell--299-300 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 101, 144, 161, 174

"Strahlenberg divides them into 10 tribes, and Syboreen's Almanack for 1876 gives their number at 210,000. They belong to the great Turk family, and hence their Siberian locality is remarkable, because the Turks [300] have ever been the people to displace others, whereas the Yakutes have been themselves displaced, and driven into this inhospitable climate, it is supposed, by the stronger Buriats."

11: Lansdell--300 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 231, 342, 354

"The winter dwellings of the people have doors of raw hides, and log or wicker walls calked with cow-dung, and flanked with banks of earth to the height of the windows. The latter are made of sheets of ice, kept in their place from the outside by a slanting pole, the lower end of which is fixed in the ground. They are rendered air-tight by pouring on water, which quickly freezes round the edges; and the fact that it takes a long time to melt these blocks of ice thus fixed is highly suggestive of what the temperature must be, both without and within. The flat roof is covered with earth, and over the door, facing the east, the boards project, making a covered place in front, like the natives' houses in the Caucasus. Under the same roof are the winter shelters for the cows and for the people, the former being the larger. The fireplace consists of a wicker frame plastered over with clay, room being left for a man to pass between the fireplace and the wall. The hearth is made of beaten earth, and on it there is at all times a blazing fire, and logs of larchwood throw up showers of sparks to the roof. Young calves, like children, are often brought into the house to the fire, whilst their mothers cast a contented look through the open door at the back of the fireplace. Behind the fireplace, too, are the sleeping-places of the people, which in the poorer dwellings consist only of a continuation of the straw laid in the cow-house."

11: Lansdell--300-301 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 342

"In the winter they have but about five hours of daylight, which penetrates as best it can through the icy windows; and in the evening all the party sit round [301] the fire on low stools, men and women smoking. The summer yourts of these people are formed of poles about 20 feet long, which are united at the top into a roomy cone, covered with pieces of bright yellow and perfectly flexible birch bark, which are not merely joined together, but are also handsomely worked along the seams with horsehair thread."

11: Lansdell--301 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 237, 352, 415

"The houses are not overstocked with furniture, and the chief cooking utensil is a large iron pot. At the time of the invasion of the Russians, this article was deemed such a treasure that the price asked for a pot was as many sable-skins as would fill it. They use also in winter a bowl-shaped frame of wicker-work, plastered with frozen cow-dung, in which they pound their porridge."

Il: Lansdell--301 [2] M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 261, 585

"With regard to their food, the Yakutes, if they have their choice, love to eat horse-flesh; and their adage says that to eat much meat, and grow fat upon it, is the highest destiny of man. They are the greatest gluttons. So far back as the days of Strahlenberg, it was said that four Yakutes would eat a horse. They rarely kill their oxen for food; and at a wedding, the favourite dish served up by the bride to her future lord is a boiled horse's head, with horse-flesh sausages. When, however, horse-flesh or beef is wanting, they are not at all nice as to what they consume, for they eat the animals they take for fur, and woe to the unfortunate horse that becomes seriously injured in travel! It is killed and eaten then and there, the men taking off their girdles to give fair play to their stomachs, which swell after the fashion of a boa-constrictor. Thus earnestly do they aspire to their notion of the highest destiny of man!"

11: Lansdell--301-302 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 234, 252, 262, 273

"Milk is in general request among them, whether from cows or mares; and when they are [302] in the neighbourhood of the Russians, and can get flour, they do so; but far away in the forests they make a sort of porridge or bread, not exactly of sawdust, but of the under bark of the spruce, fir, and larch, which they cut in small pieces, or pound in a mortar, mixing it with milk, or with dried fish, or boiling it with glutinous tops of the young sprouts. In spring, when the sap is rising, they gather their bark harvest. They make also fermented beverages of milk; and in the height of summer, when the mares foal, an orgie is held, at which the men drain enormous bowls of this intoxicating liquor; whilst the women, denied the privilege of intoxication, solace themselves by getting as near to it as they can by smoking tobacco. The distillation of sour milk is also practised, producing a coarse spirit known as arigui. They devour likewise enormous quantities of melted butter. This also can be prepared in such a way as to cause intoxication when taken in sufficient quantities."

11: Lansdell--302 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 171, 291, 492

"The dress of the Yakutes resembles in its main features that of the other natives of Siberia, save, perhaps, that they are fonder of ornaments. Both sexes riding a good deal on oxen and horses, a perpendicular slit is made up the back from the bottom of the sanayakh, or upper garment, in order to render the wearer comfortable in the saddle, and some of the women add behind them a cushion or pad, to save them from the rough motion of the animals. During the milder part of the year a robe, made of very pliable leather, stained yellow, is worn, which indoors is frequently laid aside, and males and females sit by the fire, leaving the upper part of the body naked."

11: Lansdell--302-303 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 281, 291

"I bought a pair of women's Yakute boots of this leather. [303] They fit tight to the leg, and have at the top a flap of black velvet with red cloth trimming, which can be turned down and exposed for show in fair weather, or turned up, bringing the boots to the thighs. On each boot are two broad leather thongs, five or six feet long, to wind round the leg. Waterproof boots are here made, called by the Russians torbasis. These are cut from horse-hide, steeped in sour milk, then smoked, and finally rubbed well, with fat and fine soot. They last exceedingly well and are an inestimable comfort to the wearer, enabling him to tramp through snow, water, and mud without inconvenience."

11: Lansdell--303 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 294, 854

"The Yakute women are clever in making up fur garments. When visiting a Yakute family, I was looking about for a souvenir, and could at first see nothing to buy. In the room hung a curious cradle, very nearly resembling a coal-scuttle, which, when travelling, they suspend at the side of a reindeer; but this was too large for me to bring away. At length the mater-familias drew out a box in which she kept her treasures. Among these were some large pieces of fur, each consisting of an immense number of the small pieces of white skin that are found under the squirrel's neck. No piece was so large as the palm of the hand, and she had sewn them together with great industry. These I bought, much to the disgust of her daughter, for whom they were to have made a dandy garment. I purchased also of the old lady what I prized more, namely, an 'itti,' or large cap, coming down with flaps at the ears. The crown is made of the skins of sables' feet, and it has a border all round of the fur of sables' tails. The sight of this, since my return, has often excited the admiration of my lady friends."

11: Lansdell--304 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 231, 241, 492

"The Yakutes who inhabit the inclement region adjacent to the Frozen Ocean have neither horses nor oxen, but breed large numbers of dogs, which draw them to and fro on their fishing excursions. Even those living on the 62nd parallel keep cattle under far greater difficulties than usual, for they have to make long journeys to collect hay, and do not always find enough. The cold prevents their breeding sheep, goats, or poultry. Nevertheless, cattle and hunting are their chief means of subsistence, for they do not in general cultivate the land, though in the gardens at Yakutsk are grown potatoes, cabbages, radishes, and turnips; gherkins, too, are reared in hot-beds."

Il: Lansdell --304 [2] M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 287, 439

"Some products of Yakutsk industry are purchased by the Russians, particularly floor-cloths of white and coloured felts, which are cut in strips and sewed together like mosaic."

11: Lansdell--304 [3] M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 326, 439

"From the earliest times they have been able to procure and work for themselves metals*

* The iron ore of the Vilui was smelted by the Yakutes long before the advent of the Russians, and the other tribes got from them iron axes, awls, and tools for stripping and dressing hides. The Yakutes also make copper ornaments for clothes and harness, and the metal plates which they sew on their girdles. Even now, although they use European guns, they still make for themselves the great knife, or dagger, which is worn at the waist. The Yakutsk steel is more flexible than the Russian, and yet blades made of it will cut copper or pewter as easily as European blades."

11: Lansdell--304-305 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 104, 174, 197

"The language of the Yakutes, which is largely spoken by the Russians who live among them, is one of the principal means by which we are led to assume their Turkish origin, for Latham says their speech is intelligible at Constantinople, and their traditions (for literature they have none) bespeak a southern origin. [305]

Here are some Yakute words compared with Turkish:--

English.	Yakute.	Turk.
Yes	Sittee	Evet
No	Socht	Yokh
Well	Outchigey	Peky, Aee
Bad	Thoosahane	Fené
Bread	Astobitt	Ek-mek
Water	On	Soo
Beef	Augauss	Seyir
Horse	Att	Att
Road	Coll	Yol
Man	Kissi	Kissi, Adami
Woman	Faiktorr	Aorat
Tree	Marss	
Rain	Samirr	Yaghmoor

English.	Yakute.	Turk.
One	Bare	Bir
Two	Akee	Eekee
Three	Oose	Ootch
Four	Terte	Dort
Five	Baiss	Besh
Six	Alta	Altee
Seven	Sett	Yedee
Eight	Agaouss	Autuz
Nine	Togouss	Tokuz
Ten	Owni	On
Eleven	Onordoubis	On-bir
Twelve	Okorduchi	On-eekee
Twenty	Surbia	Igirme"

11: Lansdell--305 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 114, 177, 756, 797

"Strahlenberg calls these people Pagans, but the latest writers call them Christians; and the method of their conversion was, it is said, extraordinary, for the Russian priests not making much headway against their superstitions, an ukase was one day issued setting forth that the good and loyal nation of the Yakutes were thought worthy to enter, and were consequently admitted into, the Russian Church, to become a part of the Tsar's Christian family, and entitled to all the privileges of the rest of his children. Such was the tenor of this strange proclamation, and success attended the measure. The new Christians showed perfect sincerity in the adoption of their novel faith, and the Russian priests have established their sway over the Yakute race, though amongst the outlying portion a lingering belief in Shamanism still survives, of which travellers from Yakutsk to Okhotsk have been made aware by their Yakute guides leaving them awhile in foggy weather, and stealing off into the forest to perform certain mysterious rites."

11: Lansdell--305-306 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 205, 484

"The distance from Yakutsk to Okhotsk is 800 miles [306] and the journey, whether undertaken in summer or winter, is one of the severest. The map gives one the idea that it might almost be accomplished by ascending the river Aldan and one of its affluents to the Stanovoi mountains. The usual plan, however, is to leave Yakutsk on horseback, with all the luggage on pack-saddles. Some estimate may be formed of the traffic once passing on this route from the fact that there were formerly employed in it from 20,000 to 30,000 horses. The postal service is still continued between Irkutsk and the Sea of Okhotsk; but there is no telegraph; hence the fact of Professor Nordenskjold having been frozen in the ice on the north-east coast of Siberia was brought a long way by courier before it could be made known by telegram to Europe.

One of the difficulties of the winter journey is the insufficient sleeping accommodation on the route. The houses, when they exist, are very bad, and when they fail, travellers sleep in a tent, or else upon furs and wraps in the open air. They usually lie, however, by a roaring fire, and so roast on one side whilst they freeze on the other--changing their position when need requires."

11: Lansdell--306-307 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-1-2
116, 484, 492

"After proceeding for some distance the traveller [RCH: on a journey from Yakutsk to Okhotsk] has to exchange his horse for a novel kind of steed--a reindeer, on which the mere gaining of one's seat, to say nothing of keeping it, is by no means so easy as might be supposed. * Having gained his reindeer [307] seat, the English traveller may keep it--

> * To get on the animal's back, as one would mount a donkey, would probably cripple the deer for life. The saddle is therefore placed on its shoulder close to the neck, and to mount, the rider, holding the bridle, stands at the right side of the animal, with his face turned forwards. He then raises his left foot to the saddle, which he never touches with his hands, and springing with the right leg, and aided also by a pole, which he holds in his right hand, he gains his seat. The native girls and women are as expert in this jumping as the men, and rarely want assistance in mounting.

if he can. He will most likely fall off half-a-dozen times in the first quarter of an hour, until he discovers that he must poise himself in such a manner that his body may continually, and with ease, lend itself to a swinging motion. * There is a second lesson to be

> * The practised reindeer riders acquire the habit of striking gently with the heel, alternately right and left, at every step, just behind the animal's

> shoulders. This is done, not for the purpose of stimulating the deer, but because the motion described is the surest means of maintaining equilibrium. The staff, too, with which the rider mounts is carried in his hand, and is used for maintaining an equipoise in riding; but any attempt of the rider, in the first critical moment, to support himself by resting the staff on the ground, is sure to end in his being unseated.

learned by the uninitiated, which is usually imparted in a very impressive manner; for should the cavalier attempt to hold with the knees, and the cushion consequently slip back, the moment the weight is felt on the animal's back, he bends under his haunches and lets the rider slip to the ground, and that perhaps in ice, snow, or a pool of water.

As the traveller approaches Okhotsk he has again to change his mode of conveyance, to be drawn this time by dogs. All three methods of travel have their delights on this lonely journey, the tedium of which is sometimes relieved by an extemporary hunting scene.† [RCH: for text of footnote see category 116, pp. 307-308]"

11: Lansdell--307-308 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 224, 262

"Mr. Erman describes the killing, during his journey, of a wild sheep, and the joy of the Yakutes at the prospect of getting fresh meat for supper. One of them cried out characteristically, 'I will stay awake the whole night, and eat till we set out.' Whilst the carcase was being prepared, every one cut for himself some thin wooden skewers, on which he spitted a row of little bits of meat. These were only appetizers, to be followed by large pieces boiled in the pot. The hunter, however, who had killed the sheep claimed as his perquisite the animal's head; the brains, as a [308] special delicacy, he sucked out raw, and cut out the eyes to be dressed for his own exclusive benefit."

11: Lansdell--308 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-1-2
116, 231, 487, 492

"The difficulties of the summer journey are somewhat different in character [RCH: from the winter journey from Yakutsk to Okhotsk]. A large part of the way lies over swampy ground, on which the causeways are not kept in repair, and where the horses flounder in mud and water, into which they occasionally pitch the rider. It is no uncommon thing for horses to die under the fatigues of the way. The Yakutes, moreover, have a cruel fashion of giving their horses little food whilst journeying. A similar custom obtains farther east, among the Gilyaks, where I found that, though they gave a dog two pieces of fish daily when at home, yet, when travelling, they gave him only one, because the dogs immediately after eating are always lazy and feeble. *

* It does not appear that the Yakutes are otherwise cruel to their horses, for Erman relates that, on going up to a horse that had carried him many miles, to pat his neck by way of saying adieu, the Yakutes came up and embraced the other horses, putting their arms round their necks and hugging them like children. Mr. Hill, too, discovered in a very practical way the regard of the Yakutes for their horses, when, food having run short, and after a dinner of only cranberries and nuts, he proposed that one of the animals should be killed and eaten, the Yakutes replied that they never killed one of their horses until they had passed five whole days together without any sort of food. It would be a shame, they said, that while they

had tea and a morsel of sugar, and the prospect before them of getting other food, one of the poor creatures should be slain. Mr. Hill, therefore, and his merchant friend had to take their guns and hunt for game, with a keenness which they had never known before.

These, then, are some of the difficulties of the old route, from Irkutsk to the Pacific, which happily it did not fall to my lot to be obliged to encounter; but I crossed the Baikal instead, and, after making a détour to the Chinese frontier, continued across the Buriat steppe to the Amur."

11: Lansdell--772-778 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut-1-7
116, 113

APPENDIX G.

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